

June 30, 2008

Dear Governor Blagojevich and Members of the Illinois General Assembly,

In accordance with the Illinois Early Learning Council Act (Public Act 93-380) we are pleased to submit a Fiscal Year 2008 report describing the Illinois Early Learning Council's accomplishments. By approving legislation in the Spring of 2003 that created the Illinois Early Learning Council, you took a major step toward establishing a high-quality statewide early childhood service system to respond to the needs of Illinois' families with young children.

The Illinois Early Learning Council, which is comprised of gubernatorial and legislative appointees representing a broad range of constituencies, is committed to ensuring that all Illinois children are safe, healthy, eager to learn and ready to succeed by the time they enter school. Through collaborative efforts to coordinate, improve and expand upon existing early childhood programs and services, the Council is working to meet the early learning needs of all children from birth to age five and their families.

Since its inception five years ago, the Council, in partnership with Governor Blagojevich and the Illinois General Assembly, has made significant contributions to raising the profile of Illinois as a national leader in the field of early childhood. The Preschool for All program, based on a blueprint created by the Illinois Early Learning Council, makes Illinois the first state in the nation with the goal of offering high-quality preschool to all three- and four-year-olds while expanding child development and family support services to at-risk infants and toddlers. The Council has also made recommendations that have strengthened the quality of all of Illinois' early childhood programs for children from birth to age five, continued to build a well-qualified workforce, and enhanced accountability through investments in quality assurance.

In the past year, the new committees of the Council, created in response to feedback from the field and suggestions from the Summit on Early Childhood held in October 2006, have established new work plans and have engaged in work on the challenges to implementing Preschool for All. Several recommendations have been passed by the Council that encourage and support high-quality early learning programs for all children in the state of Illinois.

Helping young children start school ready to learn is critical to their future success and to the well-being of society as a whole. We look forward to sharing our recommendations and accomplishments with you in the future and to actively working with you to build a strong early learning system that supports the healthy development of Illinois' children and families.

Sincerely,

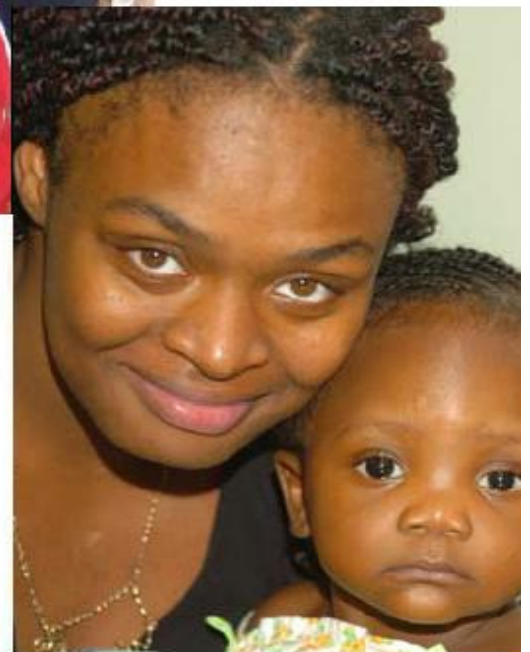


Harriet Meyer
President, Ounce of Prevention Fund
Co-Chair, Illinois Early Learning Council



Elliot Regenstein
Partner, EducationCounsel, LLC
Co-Chair, Illinois Early Learning Council

Illinois Early Learning Council



Annual Report

Fiscal Year 2008

**Illinois Early Learning Council
Fiscal Year 2008 Annual Report**

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Illinois Early Learning Council

BACKGROUND

The State of Illinois supports many early learning programs for children from birth to age five and their families. Governor Rod Blagojevich and members of the General Assembly took a major step toward establishing a statewide high-quality early childhood system by approving legislation in the spring of 2003 that created the Illinois Early Learning Council (the Council). The Council is governed by Public Act 93-380 (the Illinois Early Learning Council Act), which was co-sponsored by all four legislative leaders and signed into law by Governor Blagojevich in July 2003.

VISION

The vision of the Illinois Early Learning Council is that all children in Illinois start school safe, healthy, eager to learn and ready to succeed.

MISSION

The mission of the Council is to meet the early learning needs of children from birth to age five and their families by establishing a high-quality, accessible, and comprehensive statewide early learning system. This will be accomplished by:

- Guiding collaborative efforts and making recommendations to coordinate, improve and expand upon existing early childhood programs and services, and
- Engaging in planning, coordination and linkages across programs, divisions and agencies at the state level as well as making use of existing reports, research, and planning efforts.

MEMBERSHIP

The Council is currently comprised of gubernatorial and legislative appointees who serve on a voluntary, unpaid basis. Council members represent a broad range of constituencies, including schools, child care centers and homes, Head Start, higher education, state, local, and federal government agencies, the General Assembly, business, law enforcement, foundations, and parents. The Council includes representation from both public and private organizations, and its membership reflects regional, racial, and cultural diversity to ensure representation of the needs of all Illinois children. The Council as a whole meets a minimum of three times a year. Members are encouraged to participate on at least one committee of the Council. Both members who are formally appointed to the Council and early childhood stakeholders who serve on individual committees act as a collective advisory body, working collaboratively to develop advisory recommendations in keeping with the Council's vision, mission, and goals. A full list of Illinois Early Learning Council members is included in Appendix A.

COMMITTEE STRUCTURE AND CHARGES

The Council approves a committee structure to guide its work and to accomplish its priority goals. Council members are encouraged to participate on at least one committee during their tenure. Committee membership is also open to other early childhood stakeholders. Committees strive to recruit members who represent a diverse array of constituency groups, as well as the regional,

cultural and linguistic diversity in the state. The Council is co-chaired by Harriet Meyer, President of the Ounce of Prevention Fund, and Elliot Regenstein, Partner at EducationCounsel LLC, in affiliation with Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough. The Council Co-chairs designate Council committee Co-chairs.

Illinois Early Learning Council

**Co-Chairs: Harriet Meyer, Ounce of Prevention Fund
Elliot Regenstein, EducationCounsel LLC**

Oversight and Coordination

**Co-chairs: Judith Walker Kendrick, Chicago Coalition for Site-Administered Programs
Janice Moenster, Children's Home + Aid**

Charge: Provide advice to the Early Learning Council to help ensure the effective implementation of all Preschool for All birth to five services and program quality components and Early Learning Council recommendations

Charge: Recommend systems focusing on standards, assessments, systems-level program evaluation, and quality assurance that support both individual children's learning and development and programs' continuous improvement.

Charge: Recommend strategies to improve coordination and integration across early childhood programs and systems to address the comprehensive nature of children's healthy development and readiness for school.

Workforce Development

**Co-chairs: Ava Harston, Illinois Federation of Teachers
Jan Maruna, IL Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies**

Charge: Ensure an adequate and stable supply of highly qualified and diverse early childhood professionals to provide high-quality early childhood services.

Public Awareness

**Co-chairs: Jerry Stermer, Voices for Illinois Children
Kathleen Villano, ECDEC, Schaumburg, Palatine and Wheeling Townships**

Charge: Increase participation in high-quality early learning programs by providing consistent, high-quality information, outreach and technical assistance to families, early childhood providers, and other stakeholders.

Space Capacity

**Co-chairs: Ric Estrada, Erie Neighborhood House
Anthony Raden, Chicago Department of Children and Youth Services**

Charge: Increase the space capacity in communities to serve children in high-quality preschool classrooms and infant-toddler care and education settings, especially where there are shortages.

<p style="text-align: center;">Infants and Toddlers</p> <p>Co-chairs: Jeanna Capito, Positive Parenting DuPage Mark Valentine, Ounce of Prevention Fund</p>
<p>Charge: Expand access to high-quality early childhood development programs for all at-risk children under three years of age.</p> <p>Charge: Improve the quality of infant-toddler child care.</p> <p>Charge: Improve coordination across infant-toddler programs and services at the state and local levels. Develop recommendations regarding the creation of an outreach system for all new parents to provide basic information and support and to identify and connect families who need more intensive services to appropriate programs and services.</p>

Cross-Committees

<p style="text-align: center;">Linguistic and Cultural Diversity</p> <p>Co-chairs: Awilda Adorno, Wheeling School District Josie Yanguas, Illinois Resource Center</p>
<p>Charge: Develop strategies for meeting the varied needs of culturally and linguistically diverse families and young children to ensure that they are well-prepared for school.</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">Special Populations</p> <p>Co-chairs: Vinni Hall, Illinois State Board of Education Cynthia Moreno, Department of Children and Family Services</p>
<p>Charge: Expand access to high-quality early learning programs to children who face the greatest challenges, such as children with disabilities, children who are homeless, children involved in the child welfare system, children in domestic violence shelters, etc.</p>

The Linguistic and Cultural Diversity and Special Populations committees are conceptualized as “cross-committees,” such that some members from each of these committees will also be members of each of the six other committees in order to represent the needs of linguistically and culturally diverse children and families or children who are most vulnerable and their families. Other members of the Linguistic and Cultural Diversity or Special Populations committees may choose to participate in that committee only.

Additionally, the Council’s Executive Committee, comprised of Council Co-chairs, Co-chairs of Council committees, and at-large members who serve at the discretion of the Council Co-chairs, set the direction of the Council, coordinate work across committees, approve all formal recommendations for consideration by the Council, coordinate efforts with relevant ongoing planning entities, and advance the Illinois Early Childhood Asset Map, a web-based database combining information about early childhood services with demographic information, which serves as a planning tool to support achievement of the Councils’ goals and objectives.

During FY2008, the Council convened three meetings. Minutes from those meetings can be found on the Illinois Early Learning Council website, <http://www.illinois.gov/gov/elc/minutes.cfm>.

A list of Council and committee meeting dates is included in Appendix B.

COUNCIL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Since working to develop a comprehensive plan for Preschool for All and releasing the *Preschool for All* report in the spring of 2006, the Council has worked to establish Preschool for All as the benchmark for high-quality early learning programs for all three- and four-year-olds in the state.

The report served as the blueprint for Governor Blagojevich's Preschool for All proposal. Legislation creating Preschool for All was approved by both chambers of the General Assembly with strong bipartisan support, and was signed into law by Governor Blagojevich on July 26, 2006.

This legislation makes Illinois the first state in the nation with the goal of offering high-quality preschool to all three- and four-year-olds while expanding child development and family support for at-risk infants and toddlers. It is built on the platform of the State PreKindergarten program and the 11% set-aside for at-risk infants and toddlers ages birth to three-years-old. Young children who are at risk of school failure are the first priority as Preschool for All expansion builds up, followed by middle-income children and, finally, all other children whose parents want them to participate. In the original bill, a sunset date of 2008 was included for Preschool for All. During the past legislative session, the General Assembly overwhelmingly passed legislation that extended the Preschool for All sunset date until 2010, giving advocates and administrators an opportunity to demonstrate the effectiveness of the Preschool for All program based on the program evaluation that is just beginning.

In the last year, the focus of the Council and its committees has been on the implementation of Preschool for All. Committees have begun work on a variety of topics related to the Council's priorities. Some accomplishments and recommendations offered by the Council this year include:

- Establishing new work plans for each of the five committees and two cross-committees. See Appendix C for committee work plans.
- Developing recommendations for qualifications for teachers for infants and toddlers in ISBE-funded center-based programs, through a joint work group of the Infants and Toddlers committee and the Workforce Development committee, to ensure that our youngest children are served by qualified practitioners.
- Creating suggestions for changes to the Early Childhood Block Grant Request for Proposals to better tie explanations of program activities to essential elements of quality service in programs for infants and toddlers as well as preschoolers.
- Developing recommendations for components necessary for a comprehensive, high-quality technical assistance and training system.
- Convening a work group of the Oversight and Coordination committee to focus on the challenges to implementing Preschool for All in community-based settings. The work group is currently working to further the technical assistance recommendations mentioned above and clarify budget guidance for community-based programs.
- Instituting a new process through which the Council annually solicits input from various early childhood planning bodies in response to its charge to engage in planning, coordination and linkages across programs, divisions and agencies at the state level. The Council will work together with planning bodies to advance mutual priorities.

- Establishing a protocol for submitting formal Council recommendations to administrators and heads of the agencies affected by the recommendations.
- Moving forward on recommendations for use of capital initiative funds for early childhood facility building and renovation. The Space Capacity committee will continue to ready recommendations so that the early childhood field will be well-poised to take advantage of any early childhood capital initiative that may be a part of a state capital funding bill.
- Soliciting input from programs on their practices for engaging children and families from special populations, including homeless children and children in the special education and child welfare systems, among others. The information gathered will be used to help inform future work and recommendations of the Special Populations committee.
- Beginning work on recommendations for programs to help them incorporate best practices for English language learners.
- Creating public awareness documents for use by Preschool for All providers and parents.

For a full description of Illinois Early Learning Council accomplishments, please see Appendix D.

NATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON EARLY CHILDHOOD SCIENCE AND POLICY

A team of Illinois early childhood leaders was chosen through a competitive process to participate in the National Symposium on Early Childhood Science and Policy to be held at Harvard University in June 2008. The Illinois delegation consists of a bipartisan team of legislative leaders, advocates, business representatives and the Superintendent of the Illinois State Board of Education. The team will have the opportunity to participate in discussions with experts in the field, and learn more about using evidence-based practices to move forward early childhood policies. The team will work on establishing an action plan that will be implemented by the Early Learning Council. This opportunity will help Illinois to strengthen its already sound support for high-quality early childhood education, and further ground its policy work in the practices that research indicates create the best return on investment.

APPENDIX A: ILLINOIS EARLY LEARNING COUNCIL MEMBERS

Carol Adams
Secretary
Illinois Department of Human Services

Awilda Adorno
Early Childhood Center Director, retired
School District 21

Ellen Alberding
President
The Joyce Foundation

Guy Alongi
Chair
Illinois Community College Board

Ann Alvarez
President & CEO
Casa Central

Martha Arntson
Executive Director
Childcare Network of Evanston

Lori Ann Baas
Executive Director
Christopher House

Barbara Bowman
Chief Early Childhood Education Officer
Chicago Public Schools

Jeanna Capito
Executive Director
Positive Parenting DuPage

Mary Ellen Caron
Commissioner
Chicago Department of Children & Youth Services

Martina Casey
Family Child Care Provider
Service Employees International Union

The Honorable Elizabeth Coulson
State Representative
Illinois General Assembly

George Davis
Executive Director
City of Rockford Human Services Department

Mark Donahue
President
Fraternal Order of Police, Chicago Lodge 7

Ric Estrada
Executive Director
Erie Neighborhood House

Lauri Morrison Frichtl
Executive Director
Illinois Head Start Association

Phyllis Glink
Executive Director
Irving Harris Foundation

The Honorable Deborah Graham
State Representative
Illinois General Assembly

Vinni Hall
Board Member
Illinois State Board of Education

The Honorable Don Harmon
State Senator
Illinois General Assembly

Ava Harston
Education Issues Director
Illinois Federation of Teachers

Kay Henderson
Division Administrator
Illinois State Board of Education

Richard Jones
President and CEO
Metropolitan Family Services

James Kaplan
Chair
Illinois Board of Higher Education

Terri Lawrence
President
Illinois Head Start Association

Trinita Logue
President
Illinois Facilities Fund

Barry Maram
Director
Illinois Healthcare and Family Services

Janet Maruna
Executive Director
Illinois Network of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies

Maureen Marx
Professor
Western Illinois University

Samuel J. Meisels
President
Erikson Institute

Cordelia Meyer
Vice-President
Civic Committee of the Commercial Club of Chicago

Harriet Meyer (Co-Chair)
President
Ounce of Prevention Fund

Janice Moenster
Professional Development Advisor
Children's Home + Aid

Cynthia Moreno
Deputy Director
Illinois Department of Children and Family Services

Carolyn Newberry Schwartz
*The Oak Park Collaboration
for Early Childhood Care and Education*

Claudia Quigg
Executive Director
Baby TALK

Barbara Quinn
President
*Illinois Congress of
Parents and Teachers*

Anthony Raden
Deputy Commissioner for Policy
Chicago Department of Children and Youth Services

Elliot Regenstein (Co-Chair)
Partner
EducationCounsel, LLC

Linda Saterfield
Bureau Chief
*Bureau of Child Care and Development, Illinois
Department of Human Services*

Adele Simmons
Vice Chairman and Senior Executive
Chicago Metropolis 2020

Sara Slaughter
Education Program Director
McCormick Foundation

Leo Smith
Director
Illinois Birth to Five Political Action Committee

Luz Maria Solis
Administrator, Early Childhood Programs
Chicago Public Schools

Jerry Stermer
President
Voices for Illinois Children

Sheridan Turner
President and CEO
Kohl Children's Museum

Mark Valentine
Assistant Director – Illinois Birth to Three Institute
Ounce of Prevention Fund

Kathleen Villano
Project Director
*ECBG- Districts 15, 21, 23, 25, 26, 54 ,57 and
CEDA Head Start*

Judith Walker Kendrick
Director
*Chicago Coalition of Site-Administered Child Care
Programs*

Maria Whelan
President & CEO
Action for Children

Kay Willmoth
Regional Administrator
*Region V Administration for Children and Families
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services*

Josie Yanguas
Director
Illinois Resource Center

APPENDIX B: FY08 COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

2007

July

- 12** Infants and Toddlers committee videoconference from the Ounce of Prevention Fund offices in Chicago at 33 W. Monroe, Ste. 2400 and Springfield at 1 Old State Capitol Plaza, Ste. 716, 10:00am – 2:00pm
- 17** Special Populations committee videoconference from the DCFS video conference facility in Chicago at JRTC, 100 W. Randolph St., 6th Floor, Room 275 and Springfield at 406 E. Monroe, 9:00am – 11:00am
- 18** Space Capacity committee videoconference from the offices of the Illinois Department of Human Services located in Chicago at 401 S. Clinton St., 7th Floor (Executive VC), and in Springfield at 400 W. Lawrence Ave., (Room 007 – Training Room VC), 10:00am – 12:00pm
- 27** Oversight and Coordination committee, 401 S. Clinton St., 7th Floor (Executive VC), 9:30am – 3:00pm

August

- 8** Linguistic and Cultural Diversity committee, James R. Thompson Center, 100 W. Randolph St., Room TBA, Chicago, 10:00am – 12:00pm

September

- 10** Special Populations committee, Department of Children and Family Services, James R. Thompson Center, 100 W. Randolph St., 6th floor, Chicago, 9:00am – 11:00am
- 17** Public Awareness committee, videoconference from Illinois Department of Human Services in Chicago at 401 S. Clinton (Director of Healthcare and Family Services V/C room, 7th floor, S/E) and Springfield, 10:30am – 12:00pm
- 18** Community Collaboration workgroup of the Oversight and Coordination committee conference call, 10:00am – 12:00pm
- 19** Infants and Toddlers committee videoconference from the Ounce of Prevention Fund offices in Chicago at 33 W. Monroe, Ste. 2400 and Springfield at 1 Old State Capitol Plaza, Ste. 716, 1:00pm – 3:00pm
- 26** Linguistic and Cultural Diversity committee, James R. Thompson Center, 100 W. Randolph St., Room 9-034, Chicago, 10:00am – 12:00pm
- 27** Workforce Development committee videoconference from the Ounce of Prevention Fund offices in Chicago at 33 W. Monroe, Ste. 2400 and Springfield at 1 Old State Capitol Plaza, Ste. 716, 1:00pm – 3:00pm
- 28** Oversight and Coordination committee, in Chicago at 401 S. Clinton St., 7th Floor (Executive VC), and in Springfield at 400 W. Lawrence Ave., (Room 007 – Training Room VC), 10:00am – 12:00pm

October

- 1** Space Capacity committee, videoconference from the Illinois Department of Human Services in Chicago at 401 S. Clinton, 7th Floor (Executive VC) and in Springfield at 400 W. Lawrence Ave. (Room 007, Training Room VC), 1:00pm – 4:00pm

- 11 Executive committee videoconference from the Ounce of Prevention Fund offices in Chicago at 33 W. Monroe, Ste. 2400, Board Rooms and Springfield at 1 Old State Capitol Plaza, Ste. 716, 11:45am – 12:45pm
- 15 Infant and Toddler committee work group on the Prevention Initiative Request for Proposal, 33 W. Monroe St., Ste. 2400, Chicago, 12:30pm – 2:00pm
- 22 Full Early Learning Council, Michael A. Bilandic Building, 160 N. LaSalle, Room N-505, Chicago, 11:00am – 1:00pm
- 29 Special Populations committee, Department of Children and Family Services, James R. Thompson Center, 100 W. Randolph St., 6th floor, Chicago, 9:00am – 11:00am

November

- 5 Public Awareness committee, Voices for Illinois Children, 208 S. LaSalle St., Ste 1490, Chicago, 10:30am – 12:00pm
- 15 Space Capacity committee, videoconference from the Ounce of Prevention Fund offices in Chicago at 33 W. Monroe, Ste. 2400 and Springfield at 1 Old State Capitol Plaza, Ste. 716, 10:00am – 12:00pm
- 16 Workgroup of the Oversight and Coordination committee: Addressing challenging to implementing Preschool for All in Child Care/Community-based Settings, Action for Children, 1340 S. Damen, Chicago, 10:00am – 12:00pm

December

- 5 Linguistic and Cultural Diversity committee, James R. Thompson Center, 100 W. Randolph St., Room 9-034, Chicago, 9:30am – 12:00pm
- 7 Infants and Toddlers committee videoconference from the Ounce of Prevention Fund offices in Chicago at 33 W. Monroe, Ste. 2400 and Springfield at 1 Old State Capitol Plaza, Ste. 716, 10:00am – 12:00pm
- 13 Joint Workgroup of the Workforce Development committee and the Infants and Toddlers committee, videoconference from the Ounce of Prevention Fund offices in Chicago at 33 W. Monroe, Ste. 2400 and Springfield at 1 Old State Capitol Plaza, Ste. 716, 10:00am – 2:00pm

2008

January

- 11 Workforce Development committee videoconference from the Ounce of Prevention Fund offices in Chicago at 33 W. Monroe, Ste. 2400 and Springfield at 1 Old State Capitol Plaza, Ste. 716, 1:00pm – 3:00pm
- 14 Public Awareness committee, Voices for Illinois Children, 208 S. LaSalle St., Ste 1490, Chicago, 10:30am – 12:00pm
- 18 Oversight and Coordination committee, in Chicago at 401 S. Clinton St., 7th Floor (Executive VC), and in Springfield at 400 W. Lawrence Ave., (Room 007 – Training Room VC), 10:00am – 12:00pm

February

- 4 Special Populations committee, Department of Children and Family Services, James R. Thompson Center, 100 W. Randolph St., 6th floor, Chicago, 9:00am – 11:00am
- 5 Space Capacity committee, audioconference from Holland + Knight, 131 S. Dearborn Street, 30th Floor, Chicago, 10:00am – 12:00pm

- 11 Executive committee videoconference from the Ounce of Prevention Fund offices in Chicago at 33 W. Monroe, Ste. 2400 and Springfield at 1 Old State Capitol Plaza, Ste. 716, 1:00pm – 2:00pm
- 13 Linguistic and Cultural Diversity committee, James R. Thompson Center, 100 W. Randolph St., Room 9-034, Chicago, 9:30am – 12:00pm
- 25 Full Early Learning Council, Michael A. Bilandic Building, 160 N. LaSalle, Room N-505, Chicago, 11:00am – 1:00pm
- 27 Infants and Toddlers committee videoconference from the Ounce of Prevention Fund offices in Chicago at 33 W. Monroe, Ste. 2400 and Springfield at 1 Old State Capitol Plaza, Ste. 716, 10:00am – 12:00pm

March

- 5 Special Populations committee, Carole Robertson Center for Learning, 2929 West 19th Street, Chicago, 9:00am – 11:30am
- 6 Linguistic and Cultural Diversity committee Work Group on Changes in Illinois law via audioconference, 1:00pm – 3:00pm
- 14 Infant Toddler Committee and Workforce Development committee joint work group, Ounce of Prevention Fund offices in Chicago at 33 W. Monroe, Ste. 2400, with audioconference available, 1:30pm – 3:30pm
- 27 Workforce Development committee videoconference from the Ounce of Prevention Fund offices in Chicago at 33 W. Monroe, Ste. 2400 and Springfield at 1 Old State Capitol Plaza, Ste. 716, 1:00pm – 3:00pm
- 31 Public Awareness committee, Voices for Illinois Children, 208 S. LaSalle St., Ste 1490, Chicago, 1:00pm – 2:30pm

April

- 2 Space Capacity committee, Administration and Finance Workgroup, Illinois Facilities Fund, One North LaSalle Suite 700, Chicago, 3:00pm – 5:00pm
- 3 Oversight and Coordination committee videoconference from the Ounce of Prevention Fund offices in Chicago at 33 W. Monroe, Ste. 2400 and Springfield at 1 Old State Capitol Plaza, Ste. 716, 10:00am – 1:00pm
- 10 Linguistic and Cultural Diversity committee Changes in Illinois Law work group, Illinois State Board of Education offices, James R. Thompson Center, 100 W. Randolph St., Chicago, with audio conference available, 3:00pm – 5:00pm.
- 14 Space Capacity committee Policy and Data Workgroup, Ounce of Prevention Fund offices in Chicago at 33 W. Monroe, Ste. 2400, 10:00am-12:00pm
- 23 Infants and Toddlers committee and Workforce Development committee joint work group, Ounce of Prevention Fund offices in Chicago at 33 W. Monroe, Ste. 2400, with audio conference available, 12:15pm-2:15pm
- 23 Linguistic and Cultural Diversity committee, James R. Thompson Center, 100 W. Randolph St., Room 9-034, Chicago, 9:30am – 12:00pm
- 23 Infants and Toddlers committee videoconference from the Ounce of Prevention Fund offices in Chicago at 33 W. Monroe, Ste. 2400 and Springfield at 1 Old State Capitol Plaza, Ste. 716, 10:00am – 12:00pm
- 30 Special Populations committee, Christopher House, 4701 N. Winthrop, Chicago, with audio conference available, 9:30am-11:30am.

May

- 12** Oversight and Coordination committee, Children's Home & Aid, 125 S. Wacker, Chicago, 10:30am-3:00pm
- 13** Space Capacity committee, Ounce of Prevention Fund offices, 33 W. Monroe, 5th floor meeting rooms, 10:00am – 12:00 pm
- 19** Executive committee videoconference from the Ounce of Prevention Fund offices in Chicago at 33 W. Monroe, Ste. 2400 and Springfield at 1 Old State Capitol Plaza, Ste. 716, 11:00am – 12:00pm

June

- 5** Linguistic and Cultural Diversity committee, with audioconference available, at the James R. Thompson Center, 100 W. Randolph St., Room 9-034, Chicago, 9:30am – 12:00pm
- 9** Full Early Learning Council, Michael A. Bilandic Building, 160 N. LaSalle, Room N-502, Chicago, 11:00am – 1:00pm
- 23** Public Awareness committee, Voices for Illinois Children, 208 S. LaSalle, Chicago, 12:00pm-1:30pm
- 25** Infants and Toddlers committee, videoconference from the Ounce of Prevention Fund offices in Chicago at 33 W. Monroe, Ste. 2400 and Springfield at 1 Old State Capitol Plaza, Ste. 716, 10:00am – 12:00pm
- 25** Infants and Toddlers committee and Government Interagency Team of the Birth to Five Project joint work group on Community Collaborations, the Ounce of Prevention Fund offices in Chicago at 33 W. Monroe, Ste. 2400, 12:30pm – 2:00pm

APPENDIX C: COMMITTEE WORK PLANS

Infants and Toddlers Committee Work Plan

GOALS:

- Expand access to high-quality early childhood development programs for all at-risk children under three years of age.
- Improve the quality of infant-toddler child care, programs, and services.
- Improve coordination across infant-toddler programs and services at the state and local levels.
- Complete objectives from previous committee.

OBJECTIVES:

Objective 1

Identify and make recommendations regarding opportunities to expand funding for infant and toddler programs and services, including increasing the Infant Toddler set-aside of the Early Childhood Block Grant.

Timeframe: Short Term

ACTION STEPS

- Committee co-chairs and staffer will draft recommendation language to be presented to the Infants and Toddlers Committee during the December meeting. The recommendation will include suggestions regarding what proportion of funds should be allocated to specific services and infrastructure supports.
- As recommendations related to other goals are made, the committee will attempt to identify needs and potential opportunities for expanded funding.

Objective 2

Make recommendations for a system of capacity building and resource development to ensure that infant and toddler programs are aware of funding opportunities and are prepared to apply for and implement high quality infant toddler services.

Timeframe: Long Term

ACTION STEPS

- Research existing mechanisms for capacity building.
- Identify gaps in the availability of capacity building and resource development for infant and toddler programs across the state.
- Research funding opportunities.
- Create a recommendation which will include several components:
 - Ensure that programs (those who are applying and those who would like to apply) are at a level of quality that could sustain a research-based model, possibly through one-on-one consultation.

- Link programs that could support a research-based model to available funding opportunities and provide assistance in applying for funds. Create a template of what programs should have in place before applying as a resource. (toolkit?)
- Ensure that programs that have received funding have access to supports to deliver a quality program.

Objective 3

Develop a system of Infant-Toddler specialists to serve as consultants to child care providers, perhaps modeled after Infant-Toddler specialists in other states.

Timeframe: Long Term

ACTION STEPS

- Research will be done by staffer and committee co-chairs and presented at the December meeting regarding:
 - How does the role of Infant-Toddler Specialist differ from Nurse Consultant and Mental Health Consultant?
 - What are the tasks of the social emotional specialists that are being hired by the CFCs across the state? Are they skilled in infant and toddler services?
 - Could we link Infant Toddler Specialists to the building capacity objective?
 - Of the specialists who are offering services to providers who work with infants and toddlers, how and where are the gaps in the service delivery system?

Objective 4

Review licensing requirements for center-based infant and toddler care and consider recommendations to improve quality.

Timeframe: Long term

ACTION STEPS

- Further discussion and review of licensing requirements by committee.
- Identify a DCFS licensing representative to participate in the Infants and Toddlers committee.
- Identify mechanisms to coordinate with work being done on this topic at the IDHS Child Care Advisory Council.

Objective 5

Develop recommendations regarding the creation of an outreach system for all new parents to provide basic information and support, and to identify and connect families who need more intensive services to appropriate programs and services.

Timeframe: Mid term

ACTION STEPS

- Look into mechanism similar to CCR&Rs to facilitate access to family support/home visiting programs.

Objective 6

Make recommendations to improve coordination of program model specific monitoring and technical assistance across government agencies and other entities.

Timeframe: Mid term

ACTION STEPS

- To be determined

Objective 7

Create recommendations for a process to approve comprehensive, intensive, research-based models to be funded through the Prevention Initiative, as required by statute.

Timeframe: to be determined

ACTION STEPS

- To be determined

Objective 8

Make recommendations on revisions to the ISBE Prevention Initiative RFP to better reflect changes to the ISBE PI statute.

Timeframe: Short term

ACTION STEPS

- Sub-committee created to complete these objectives based on the work that was already started by the previous committee. First meeting of this sub-committee is September 15, 2007.
- Recommended revisions submitted to ISBE in December 2007.

Linguistic and Cultural Diversity Committee Work Plan

GOAL:

- Develop strategies for meeting the varied needs of culturally and linguistically diverse families and young children to ensure that they are well-prepared for school.

OBJECTIVES:

Objective 1

Research and make recommendations regarding best instructional practices that will include the areas of Assessment and Instruction and will cover theories of bilingualism, second language acquisition, and social cultural aspects.

ACTION STEPS

Long-term:

- Develop appropriate EC L1 and L2 assessments.
- Website or collection of EC and bilingual sources that cross-link between EC and bilingual information and relevant areas and sites with relevant data.

Short-term:

- ISBE-Implement home language survey in EC settings as to trigger both L1 and L2 EC assessments.
- Work on creating a definitions and terms glossary to bridge bilingual and EC.
- Work with ISBE to approve language proficiency standards for early childhood settings.
- Promote NAEYC position.

Objective 2

Create recommendations for workforce development and professional development for both the current and future early childhood workforce.

- **Current/existing workforce development:**
 - Develop recommendations for additional training for practitioners to become more familiar with bilingual children and families.
 - Develop recommendations to increase the capacity of the current workforce to work with English language learners and bilingual children.
- **Future workforce development:**
 - Creates strategies that will help to increase the pool of certified bilingual early childhood teachers.

ACTION STEPS

Long-term:

1. For all teachers (EC-12), survey course requirements for ELLs.
2. Research scholarship programs for bilingual/ESL certification at EC levels.

3. Research options for changing approach to professional development at ISBE, and research and make recommendations for the requirements for child care providers for personnel who work with ELLs.

Short-term:

- Promote and disseminate state pre-k scholarships that include bilingual/ESL tracks e.g. Preschool for All.
- Develop recommendations around increased investment in bilingual EC teacher preparation.
- Promote ELL offerings of childcare, Head Start and staff development programs.

Objective 3

Research and make recommendations for making changes in Illinois Law around serving bilingual students.

Timeframe: pending agenda item

ACTION STEPS

- To be developed

Oversight and Coordination Committee Work Plan

GOALS:

- Provide advice to the Early Learning Council to help ensure the effective implementation of all Preschool for All birth to five services and program quality components and Early Learning Council recommendations.
- Recommend systems focusing on standards, assessments, systems-level program evaluation, and quality assurance that support both individual children's learning and development and programs' continuous improvement.
- Recommend strategies to improve coordination and integration across early childhood programs and systems to address the comprehensive nature of children's healthy development and readiness for school.

OBJECTIVES:

Objective 1

Support a diverse delivery system of early childhood services in Illinois by addressing Preschool for All Implementation challenges in child care, Head Start, and other community settings.

Timeframe: 2 years

ACTION STEPS

- Convene work groups of this committee to specifically address the challenges to implementing Preschool for All faced by child care, family child care, Head Start, and other community-based providers. The work groups will address the following:
 - Research and create recommendations for meeting the transportation needs of child care and community-based providers.
 - Identify training and technical assistance needs of child care and community-based providers and work to develop detailed recommendations for meeting those needs.
 - Solicit input from providers regarding their Early Childhood Block Grant budget questions and work with ISBE and CPS to create a FAQ document to address their questions.
 - Work with ISBE and CPS staff to make additional guidance regarding approved Preschool for All program model options and options for blended funding.
 - Work with representatives from IDCFS, IDHS, ISBE, and others to explore the relationship of IDCFS licensing with the Quality Rating System and Preschool for All.
 - Support the efforts of the Good Start, Grow Smart team to develop a shared information system to enable shared access to information and monitoring. Look into recommending that DCFS join the GSGS team.

Other ELC committee involvement:

Infants and Toddlers committee

Objective 2

Support the evaluation of Preschool for All by acting as an advisory group to ISBE and the entity chosen to conduct the evaluation.

Timeframe: 1 year

ACTION STEPS

- Establish an evaluation workgroup to confer with ISBE and the selected evaluation entity to ensure participation in the development of the Preschool for All evaluation.
- Other action steps to be defined based on activities of advisory group.

Objective 3

Develop strategies and recommendations to guide the development of community collaboration and planning systems in support of Preschool for All.

Timeframe: 2 years

ACTION STEPS

- Develop guidance for programs applying for Preschool for All regarding the successful implementation of community collaborations and the benefit to communities of convening these types of groups.
- Gather information about current collaboration conferences and suggest ways that programs can provide input regarding the content of future collaboration conferences or other opportunities for learning/professional development.
- Explore the possibility of funding community collaboration pilot projects and develop recommendations about their potential structure and essential elements.
- Work together with Head Start to create strategies for enhanced collaboration between Head Start and Preschool for All.

Other ELC committee involvement:

Infants and Toddlers and Special Populations committees

Public Awareness Committee Work Plan

GOAL:

- Increase participation in high-quality early learning programs by providing consistent, high-quality information, outreach and technical assistance to families, early childhood providers, and other stakeholders.

OBJECTIVES:

Objective 1

Develop and implement 18 month marketing plan to include targeted communications with providers (mailings, meetings, and trainings).

Timeframe: 18 months

ACTION STEPS

- Seek financial support to cover costs of consultant and materials. (October-December 2007)
- Identify marketing consultant to assist with content and design of materials (September 2007)
- Prepare marketing plan (September-October 2007)
- Implement plan (November, 2007-December 2008)
- Review progress – Ongoing

Objective 2

Create web-based and printed materials (brochures, posters etc.) for providers with specific information for decision-makers, teachers, caregivers and parents, with brand focus.

Timeframe: November-December 2007

ACTION STEPS

- To be determined through marketing plan

Space Capacity Committee Work Plan

GOAL:

- Increase the space capacity in communities to serve children in high quality classrooms, infant-toddler care, and education settings, especially in areas of greatest need.

OBJECTIVES:

Objective 1

Provide recommendations to ISBE, Capital Development Board, IDHS, and other entities concerning early childhood facilities:

- Provide boilerplate guidelines concerning best practices in the planning and development of high quality, licensable early childhood facilities to assist in the development of a capital application or RFP.
- Serve as a sounding board for ISBE, Capital Development Board, and IDHS on early childhood facilities decisions.
- Assist in the review of applications for early childhood construction grants.
- Report to the ELC on the administration, utilization, and effectiveness of any early childhood construction grants or loan programs.

ACTION STEPS

- Develop concise documents and provide reference material regarding best practices in early childhood facilities development for ISBE, Capital Development Board, and other entities.
- Recommend that the leadership of the ELC invite a representative from the Capital Development Board to join the ELC and Space Capacity committee.
- Provide a list of Space Capacity committee members to the Capital Development Board to assist in the review of applications.

Objective 2

Provide recommendations to ISBE, Capital Development Board, IDHS, and other entities concerning planning for early childhood facilities for applicants that do not have space or funding for capital investment, including renovations:

ACTION STEPS

- Develop position statement regarding the importance of allowing, if not encouraging, planning to be a component of application for capital funding.
- Provide recommendations regarding the limits of planning vs. development for applicants of capital grants.
- Provide a list of recommended planning entities. Applicants would have option to choose other planning entities.
- Encourage planning and use of respected data to be part of all applications for capital funding, whether or not planning is funded by the grant.

Objective 3

Provide ISBE and school districts with boilerplate guidelines and reference material concerning best practices in the planning and development of high quality, licensable early childhood facilities.

ACTION STEPS

- Hold meetings with ISBE and community leaders who seek new schools to emphasize the importance of planning for early childhood education capacity.
- Support the development of training workshops and technical assistance for early childhood providers on facilities development and capital financing options.
- Explore the feasibility of professional development workshops for architects and early childhood providers and stakeholders on best practices in physical design.

Objective 4

Provide recommendations to the Early Learning Council, state agencies and community-level providers and stakeholders on areas of greatest need for capital projects and financing.

ACTION STEPS

- Examine existing data sources, analyze the adequacy of the data, and make recommendations on which data sources should be used to identify areas of greatest need in the state.
- Work with researchers from IECAM, Chapin Hall, and other relevant organizations and universities to refine existing data sources and analyses. Recommend what new information should be collected and/or analyses should be conducted over the next two years to further refine capital planning and funding decisions.
- Develop a position paper and related documents that use data from IECAM, Chapin Hall, and other sources to identify communities of highest need, taking into consideration community resources and projected demographic changes. Establish criteria and principles to be used for the ranking of high-need communities within Chicago and across the state.
- Provide recommendations to early childhood providers, school districts, and local stakeholders on reliable data sources to use for needs assessments and potential capital applications.
- Encourage planning that analyzes community-level factors, dynamics, preferences, and trends not captured by early childhood program capacity and utilization data.

Objective 5

Advocate for the establishment of a dedicated statewide funding stream for early childhood capital projects and other facilities development policies.

ACTION STEPS

- Review and analyze best practices in early childhood program construction financing and facilities development. Meet with the leadership of other states (e.g. North Carolina, New Jersey and Connecticut) that have developed innovative financing models and development strategies.
- Develop a series of new policy options and recommendations for Illinois.

- Synthesize recommendations into a targeted policy agenda and advocacy plan.
- Convene meetings with Council leadership, key advocacy organizations, and other early childhood stakeholders to determine possible legislative options.
- Create brief advocacy/policy documents and other materials that: (1) make the case for capital investments targeted to early childhood providers, and (2) identify policy options and priorities.

Special Populations Committee Work Plan

GOAL:

- Expand access to high-quality early learning programs to children who face the greatest challenges, such as children with disabilities, children who are homeless, children involved in the child welfare system, children in domestic violence shelters, etc.

OBJECTIVES:

Objective 1

Define special populations and come to a common understanding of the services available to them and the challenges they face in preschool.

Timeframe: Short term

ACTION STEPS

- Develop a list of special populations to be covered by the committee.
- Conduct presentations on the needs, challenges, and supports available to the special population they represent.
- Solicit feedback on presentations – including questions that need clarification.
- Come to a common understanding of the barriers faced by particular populations and recommendations for addressing them.

Objective 2

Based on the above definition of special populations, populate the committee.

Timeframe: Short term

ACTION STEPS

- Based on list of special populations to be included in this committee's work, identify and recruit committee members who can represent and advocate for that population.

Objective 3

Develop recommendations for systems supports to expand access to high quality learning experiences to children in special populations.

Timeframe: Long term

ACTION STEPS

- Identify common issues across special populations.
- Consider committee's charge and scope (including name of committee).
- Develop recommendations on personnel and process infrastructure to identify children in special populations and link them to services that will allow them to benefit from the early education experience.
- Consider the enrollment process and a mechanism or tool to engage families and identify their circumstances (ensuring that the tool is strengths-based).

- Consider accessibility of family workers, social workers, mental health consultants, and other support personnel necessary to ensure a quality preschool experience for children in special populations.

Objective 4

Determine the mechanisms and processes for interacting with other committees to advance special populations work.

Timeframe: Medium term

ACTION STEPS

- Review charges of other committees and determine the priority issues related to special populations.
- Determine a process for interacting with other committees.
- As the committee produces recommendations to better serve special populations, discuss relevant aspects with specific committees as necessary (e.g., recruiting children from special populations may involve the public awareness committee).

Objective 5

Parental Engagement.

Timeframe: pending agenda item

ACTION STEPS

- To be developed

Workforce Development Committee Work Plan

GOAL:

- Ensure an adequate and stable supply of diverse, well-prepared early childhood professionals by focusing on a wide range of professional development needs.

OBJECTIVES:

Objective 1

Advance a professional development system, including supporting the work of the Gateways to Opportunity Professional Development Advisory Council, to support the education and training of early childhood practitioners.

Timeframe: 2 years

ACTION STEPS

- Support the planning and implementation of the Infant Toddler Credential and its integration with other research-based birth-to-three training models.
- Convene a joint Infants and Toddlers and Workforce Development work group to define qualifications for infant-toddler personnel working in Early Childhood Block Grant center-based birth to three programs.
- Embed the Gateways to Opportunity career development system into state government.
- Continue to promote a recommendation from the Early Learning Council to endorse well-qualified program administrators through the Illinois Directors Credential or an ISBE Type #75 administrative certificate.
- Promote the development and funding of targeted Type 04 teacher certification cohorts.
- Support expanded financial aid and scholarship options for early childhood practitioners.
- Work with higher education institutions to implement Public Act 094-1110, the Student Teaching Bill, permitting paid student teaching placements for candidates who are working practitioners in their current place of employment.
- Support the implementation of the AAT-ECE through higher education institutions.
- Support the offering of additional Basic Skills Test preparation resources.
- Support a model for appropriate compensation for early childhood practitioners.

Other ELC committee involvement:

Infants and Toddlers Committee

Objective 2

Advocate among leadership within higher education institutions for increased resources for early childhood programs and departments.

Timeframe: 2 years

ACTION STEPS

- Continue to engage two-year and four-year early childhood faculty members and department chairs to define what resources are needed to expand educational and clinical offerings.

- Provide presentations to higher education early childhood associations to address the changing landscape of early childhood programs and employment opportunities in Illinois.
- Work to communicate, through the Early Learning Council, changing landscape and early childhood department needs to leadership within two-year and four-year institutions.
- Support the needs of specific institutions as requested.

Objective 3

Develop strategies for increasing the number of bilingual early childhood practitioners and create models for cultural and linguistic competence training to support staff who are working in diverse communities.

Timeframe: 1 - 3 years

ACTION STEPS

- Track program models and funds distributed through the ISBE Teacher Assistance Grant which target multilingual/multicultural minority practitioners and those working in hard-to-staff geographical areas.
- Support additional financial assistance strategies which target diverse practitioners.
- Convene joint Workforce Development and Linguistic and Cultural Diversity work group to identify best practices for working successfully with multilingual/multicultural children and their families to support the work of existing practitioners in diverse communities.
- Promote Type 04 cohort certification programs which include bilingual/English as a second language coursework and credentials.

Other ELC committee involvement:

Linguistic and Cultural Diversity Committee

APPENDIX D: TIMELINE OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Illinois Early Learning Council History and Related Accomplishments

- Spring 2003 Senate Bill 565 is unanimously approved by the legislature, which creates the Illinois Early Learning Council (the Council) to establish a high-quality, accessible, and comprehensive statewide early learning system.
- Summer 2003 Public Act 93-380, the Illinois Early Learning Council Act, is signed into law by Governor Rod Blagojevich. The Council is charged with guiding collaborative efforts to coordinate, improve and expand upon existing early childhood programs and services.
- January 2004 The Illinois Early Learning Council is convened. The Council's vision, key areas of focus, and committee structure are introduced.
- Spring 2004 The Council approves goals and objectives for five committees:
- Program Quality and Quality Assurance
 - Evaluation and Assessment
 - Expansion
 - Linkage and Integration
 - Workforce Development.
- The Executive Committee, consisting of committee Co-Chairs and at-large members, is established to guide and coordinate the work of the Council.
- Spring 2004 Several Executive Committee members meet with Deputy Governor Bradley Tusk regarding the Governor's goals and Council priorities. The Deputy Governor requests that the Council develop a plan to offer high-quality preschool to all three- and four-year-olds whose parents choose to participate as well as expand child development and family support services for at-risk infants and toddlers.
- Summer 2004 The Council approves the *Essential Elements of Preschool For All* to describe critical components of a proposed Preschool For All program. Council committees begin to develop detailed recommendations for inclusion in the Council's Preschool for All plan for submission to Governor Blagojevich.
- The Council approves the *Framework for High Quality Services for Expecting Families and Families with Infants and Toddlers through Preschool For All (Framework for High Quality Services)* which recommends specific evidence-based program models to be funded by ISBE through the infant toddler set-aside of the Early Childhood Block Grant.
- Winter 2004 Council members affirm the importance of and recommend adoption of the IDHS Bureau of Child Care and Development's *Comprehensive Plan to Revise the Child Care Provider Reimbursement Rates*, including implementation of a quality rating/tiered reimbursement system to provide financial incentives for higher quality

child care services as a critical step toward improving a family's access to – and the quality of – early care and education.

- Fall 2005 The well-attended *Spotlight on Collaboration Seminar* is convened by ISBE, IDHS, and HHS to highlight successful early childhood collaboration models in Illinois communities. The conference is well-received and written materials, including a *Collaboration 101 Guidebook*, are disseminated. This effort was supported by a recommendation from the Council's Linkage and Integration Committee.
- Spring 2005 The development of the *Illinois Early Childhood Asset Map* (IECAM) website begins based on recommendations generated by the Linkage and Integration Committee. This web-based database, which combines information about early childhood services with demographic information, is a key tool for establishing a comprehensive early childhood development system serving young children and families statewide. The data that IECAM collects, displays, and makes available for analysis contributes to our understanding of how children are served and where resources are most needed.
- Fall 2006 The Council recommends that IDHS issue new rules to administer *Gateways to Opportunity* early childhood credentials. *Gateways to Opportunity*, the single statewide support network to provide guidance, encouragement, and recognition to individuals and programs that serve young children and families, offers a variety of professional development credentials that can be awarded to individuals who achieve specific educational or training milestones in early care and education. A credential is a document validating an individual's qualifications and is issued based on a variety of achievements in field experience, knowledge and skills, educational attainments and/or training accomplishments.
- 2003-06 *The Governor and the General Assembly increase investments in the Early Childhood Block grant by \$90 million and the Child Care Assistance Program by \$80 million over three fiscal years, FY 2004 – FY 2006.*
- Spring 2006 The Council releases the *Preschool for All* report, which outlines recommendations that serve as the blueprint for Governor Blagojevich's proposal. The Illinois Early Learning Council's *Preschool for All* report is available for download at the Illinois Early Learning Council website. http://www.illinois.gov/gov/elc/reports/Preschool-for-All_051006.pdf
- Spring 2006 *Preschool for All legislation is approved by both chambers of the General Assembly with strong bipartisan support to make Illinois the first state in the nation with the goal of offering voluntary, high-quality preschool to all three- and four-year-olds. Young children who are at risk of school failure are the first priority as Preschool for All expansion builds up, followed by middle-income children and, finally, all other children whose parents want them to participate.*
- The FY 2007 state budget includes \$45 million in new funding for early childhood education, for total spending of \$318 million, with 11% of early childhood funding targeted to birth-to-three programs serving at-risk infants and toddlers and their families.*

Funds also support quality and accountability enhancements recommended by the Illinois Early Learning Council. An additional \$34 million is added to the Child Care Assistance Program. Over a four-year period, the Early Childhood Block Grant grows by 73% or \$135 million and the Child Care Assistance Program by 18% or \$112 million.

- Spring 2006 Based on the work of the Council's 0-3 Quality Committee, the *Research Toolkit for Programs Serving Infants, Toddlers and Their Families: Implementing a Research-Based Program Model* is created and disseminated. Two day-long workshops on implementing research-based infant and toddler program models are provided by the Council's 0-3 Quality Workgroup & ISBE.

- Spring 2006 The *Illinois Early Childhood Collaboration* website, www.ilearlychildhoodcollab.org, is launched by the IDHS Head Start State Collaboration Office to offer stakeholders a range of information about collaboration models & resources. This effort is supported by the IDHS Child Care & Development Advisory Council and the Council's Linkage and Integration Committee. The Program Collaboration Profiles available under the website's Models section describe some of the most common service delivery approaches through which EC providers use Early Childhood Block Grant 0-3 and Preschool for All, Head Start, Child Care, and other funds and resources to provide high-quality, comprehensive, full-day, full-year services.

- Spring 2006 ISBE releases Requests for Proposals for a birth to three training and technical assistance institute and for mental health consultation for programs serving at-risk infants, toddlers and their families. These efforts implement recommendations made by the 0-3 Quality Committee.

- Summer 2006 An online *Child Care Provider Survey*, which was designed by the 3-5 Quality Committee to identify training and technical assistance needs relative to Preschool for All quality standards is completed by 1,264 programs from 86 Illinois counties.

- Fall 2006 *Preschool For All implementation begins.*

- Fall 2006 The *Governor's Summit on Early Childhood: Making Preschool for All a Reality in Communities*, funded by the National Governors Association, is convened to bring together Council members and other stakeholders to develop action plans to address challenges in implementing Preschool for All over the next three to five years. The Summit targeted four key issues: 1) Expanding space capacity in communities; 2) Using best practices to meet the needs of linguistically and culturally diverse children and families; 3) Enrolling new children through effective outreach strategies; and 4) Expanding access to high-quality early childhood development programs for at-risk children under age three.

- Winter 2006 ISBE releases a Request for Proposals for Social Emotional Consultation funds and Early Childhood Teacher Preparation Assistance Grants, which were included in the Council's Preschool for All recommendations.

- Spring 2007 The Council undergoes a strategic planning process, and changes its committee structure. Seven committees are formed, including two “cross-committees” focusing on special populations and issues of linguistic and cultural diversity. The cross committee structure ensures that issues relating to vulnerable populations and language-minority children and families will be infused within all committee work.
- Summer 2007 The Council approves a process through which it reaches out to early childhood planning bodies around Illinois, both sharing its own priorities and asking for information on the strategic plans of the other entities, enabling the bodies to work collaboratively on shared goals. This process will be undertaken annually, and is created in response to the Council’s charge to engage in planning, coordination and linkages across programs, divisions and agencies at the state level.
- Fall 2007 Early Learning Council committees create new work plans and submit their goals to the Council for approval.
- Spring 2008 A joint work group of the Infants and Toddlers committee and the Workforce Development committee create new recommendations for qualifications for practitioners in Early Childhood Block Grant funded center-based programs working with children aged birth through three.
- Spring 2008 Illinois team is selected, through competitive process, to participate in the *National Symposium on Early Childhood Science and Policy*.